



YOUR COMMUNITY, THE RPA, AND THE STATE: WHO DOES WHAT

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The diagram below shows the three principal actors in the Community Development Plan process -- the community, the Regional Planning Agency, and the state -- and summarizes the role of each.

THE THREE PRINCIPAL ACTORS IN THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN PROCESS

THE COMMUNITY

- Meet with your RPA to initiate the process.
- Discuss with RPA whether to use a consultant for preliminary "Visioning" process. Hire consultant if desired.
- Conduct community "Visioning" process.
- Work with RPA to develop Scope of Services.
- Choose consultant(s) to create Community Development Plan.
- Work with consultant during development of CD Plan.
- Forward four copies of the completed plan to DHCD for distribution among the four state agencies and one copy to the RPA.

THE REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY (RPA)

- Serve as project manager/administrator for each municipality.
- Enter into agreements with each community detailing tasks and responsibilities.
- Manage and distribute the \$30,000 planning services allocation provided by the state (up to \$5000 for preliminary planning, and the balance for development of the final CD Plan).
- Help to develop the Scope of Services for the CD plan.
- Contract with any private consultants the community may choose from the state's list.
- Contract with the community directly if the community chooses to hire the RPA to provide these planning services.
- Contract with MassHighway for the transportation element of the CD Plan.

THE STATE (interagency working group representing EOE, DHCD, DED, and EOTC)

- Provide funding (up to \$30,000) for planning services for each Massachusetts community.
- Fund and present buildout map and analysis including GIS maps, and compile community data profile.
- Supply this guidebook, *Building Vibrant Communities*, to help guide you through the process and point you toward helpful resources.
- Establish a list of pre-qualified consultants to provide planning services (Master Service Agreement List).
- Review each community's proposed Scope of Services to make sure the four core elements (open space and resource protection, housing, economic development, and transportation) have been adequately addressed.

**WORKING WITH YOUR
REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY (RPA).**

After the community has received this guidebook and has decided to participate in the Community Development Planning program, the community's chief elected official should contact the RPA. This serves as official notification of the community's intention to participate. The community and the RPA will sign an agreement describing the steps each will take throughout the CD Plan process. The RPA will serve as the community's primary guide throughout this process.

Your RPA can:

- Help you determine whether any of the CD Plan's four required elements (economic development, open space and resource protection, housing, and transportation) may be satisfied by existing studies, plans, reports, etc.
- Supply additional copies of GIS buildout maps of the community.
- Bring together neighboring towns to discuss interlocal planning.
- Help you choose a consultant.
- Help develop the Scope of Services describing the tasks that the consultant will perform, working with the community to create the CD Plan.
- Act as a planning consultant, if the community chooses to hire the RPA to prepare portions of the plan or the entire CD Plan.

**COMMUNITY
PLANNING PROFILE*****The Challenge:***

The prospect of a new outlet mall off the Mass Pike in the town of Lee had citizens worried that the downtown economy would suffer.

The Solution:

Negotiate agreements with mall developers

As part of the local approval process, the town negotiated several agreements with the mall's developers:

- *A booth at the mall with information on downtown businesses.*
- *A shuttle bus running between the mall and downtown.*
- *A ban on sit-down restaurants at the mall, to protect downtown restaurants.*